TOP SECRET

HEADQUARTERS
EIGHTH UNITED STATES ARMY (EUSAK)
APO 301, C/O PM
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

6 January 1951

THE COMMANDING GENERAL

General of the Army Douglas MacArthur
Commander-in-Chief
Far East Command

Dear General MacArthur:

In search of every possible means for regaining the initiative, I have considered the use of Chemical Warfare. From my own knowledge of US current capabilities, which does not profess to be exhaustive, I believe there exists in the ZI, stocks of persistent gases, sufficient, if properly employed to be of incalculable advantage to our forces under certain conditions. The possibilities of retaliation, particularly as we contract into a smaller perimeter, served only by one port, has caused me to reject the use of this agent except as a last resort to cover the withdrawal and evacuation from a final beachhead where pressure might be so great as to justify resorting to extreme measures. To be able to use persistent gas under such circumstances would afford an invaluable tactical advantage and would, if used under the conditions described, deny the enemy or his supporters the time required for effective retaliation.

I therefore request your consideration of the policy decision involved. If you favor its use and so recommend, and if your recommendation is approved, I suggest immediate action to initiate shipment by marine express of sufficient quantities for this purpose. I am requiring my staff to determine the tonnage and agents required in order that prompt requisition may be submitted if favorable action results from this request.

Faithfully,

M. B. RIDGWAY
Lieutenant General, United States Army
Commanding

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